TOMORROW NOW
Manitoba's GREEN Plan

Woodridge Provincial Park

Draft Management Plan

Manitoba

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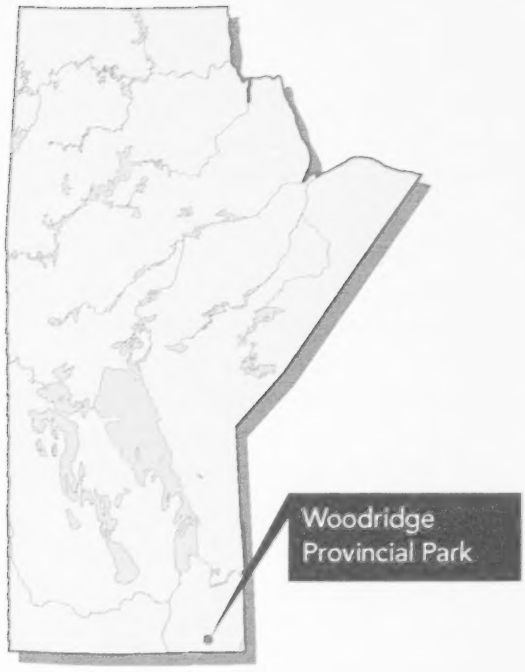

1. Introduction

The Provincial Parks Act (1993 requires that a management plan be prepared for each provincial park. Management plans establish long-term direction for parks and address issues pertaining to resource protection, use and development of park land. The process of preparing this draft management plan and coordinating the public involvement process is the responsibility of a team involving staff from Parks and Natural Areas Branch, regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and a consultant contracted to work on the project.

The Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Woodridge Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected within the context of this draft management plan.

2. Park History

In the 1960s the Manitoba government set out to establish campgrounds and picnic rest stops along the province's highways. The intention, supported by the Federal government, was to encourage people to travel across Canada. This led to the designation in 1974 of several provincial parks in Manitoba which were referred to as wayside parks. One of these parks was Woodridge Provincial Park. Today, Woodridge is one of Manitoba's smallest parks and it receives a low level of use.

3. Park Attributes

Woodridge Provincial Park is situated within in the Sandilands Provincial Forest, roughly one kilometre from the community of Woodridge in the southeast corner of Manitoba. The park is located approximately 100 kilometres southeast of Winnipeg. It is a small park, only 0.81 hectares (0.01 square kilometres) in size.

3.1 Natural

Woodridge Provincial Park is part of the Lake of the Woods portion of the Manitoba Lowlands Natural Region. It is situated on an extensive sand and gravel ridge that is one of a series of such ridges that were deposited in the area during the last period of glaciation (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011).

A large portion of the park is an open field. It is surrounded by jack pine dominated forests, which are typical of the area. Common species of vegetation found alongside the jack pine include blueberry and bearberry shrubs, lichens and mosses (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011). Wooded areas in the vicinity provide habitat for a number of species, such as white-tailed deer, black bear, ruffed grouse and other birds and small mammals (Smith et al., 1998).

3.2 Recreational

Woodridge is a small park that occasionally serves as a highway rest stop. There are several off-road vehicle trails located on the land around the park, including a snowmobile trail which runs through the park in the winter. Some visitors use Woodridge Provincial Park as a staging area, parking their vehicles and trailers in the open field before exiting the park to utilize the surrounding trails.

4. Park Management Framework

4.1 Classification

Manitoba's Provincial Park System is made up of almost 100 different parks and park reserves. Each of these areas plays a role in conserving ecosystems, preserving natural, cultural or heritage resources, and providing outdoor recreation or educational experiences. Classification descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

Woodridge Provincial Park is classified as a Recreation Park. The main purpose of a recreation park, as defined in *The Provincial Parks Act* (1993), is to provide recreational opportunities.

4.2 Park Purpose

Manitoba's provincial park system was established to conserve ecosystems and maintain biodiversity, to preserve unique and representative natural, cultural and heritage resources, and to provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities in a natural setting. Within this larger framework, individual parks contribute towards the overall objective of the provincial park system.

A System Plan for Manitoba's Provincial Parks (1997) identifies the purpose of Woodridge Provincial Park as being to provide outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting in south-eastern Manitoba. According to that plan, the park will:

- provide picnicking and day use opportunities for residents of south-eastern Manitoba; and
- serve as a highway rest stop.

Woodridge Provincial Park Map

4.3 Land Use Categories

Land Use Categories (LUCs) identify the important attributes of broad areas within a provincial park. Land may be categorized as Wilderness, Backcountry, Resource Use, Recreational Development (RD), Heritage or Access LUCs. LUC descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

All of the land comprising Woodridge Provincial Park has been categorized as a Recreational Development LUC. The main purpose of this categorization is to accommodate recreational development.

5. Park Management Guidelines

The following guidelines will direct park management actions in Woodridge Provincial Park.

5.1 Natural Values

1. The park will be retained as a natural-looking area that is characteristic of the surrounding landscape.

5.2 Recreation

1. No facilities will be provided in the park.

6. Implementation

This management plan will be reviewed in 10 to 15 years, or as may be required. The management plan is to be used in conjunction with park regulations, directives and other departmental and government policies.

Appendix A

Park Classification and Land Use Categories

Park Classifications

In accordance of section 7(2) of *The Provincial Parks Act* (1993), all provincial parks are classified as one of the following types:

(a) a wilderness park, if the main purpose of the designation is to preserve representative areas of a natural region;

(b) a natural park, if the main purpose of the designation is both to preserve areas of a natural region and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses;

(c) a recreation park, if the main purpose of the designation is to provide recreational opportunities;

(d) a heritage park, if the main purpose of the designation is to preserve an area of land containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value;

(e) any other type of provincial park that may be specified in the regulation.

Land Use Categories

In accordance with section 7(3) of *The Provincial Parks Act* (1993), all provincial parks are categorized into one or more of the following land use categories:

(a) a wilderness category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect representative or unique natural landscapes in an undisturbed state and provide recreational opportunities that depend on a pristine environment;

(b) a backcountry category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect examples of natural landscapes and provide basic facilities and trails for nature-oriented recreation in a largely undisturbed environment;

(c) a resource management category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to permit commercial resource development or extraction in a manner that does not compromise the main purpose of the park classification;

(d) a recreational development category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to accommodate recreational development;

(e) a heritage category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect a unique or representative site containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value;

(f) an access category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to provide a point or route of access in a provincial park or a location for a lodge and associated facilities;

(g) any other category that may be specified in the regulation.

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